

# Mental Health Education in New York Schools



## School Community Partnership: Growing Our Prevention Capacity

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual New York State  
Suicide Prevention Conference  
September 20, 2018

Glenn Liebman, MA  
CEO, MHANYS

**Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.**



MHANYS is a not-for-profit organization that works to end the stigma of mental illness and promote mental health wellness in New York State. MHANYS and our 26 affiliates throughout New York State provide training, education, advocacy, and policy, community-based partnership programming, and connecting individuals and families to help.



HEALTHY MINDS FOR A HEALTHY NEW YORK

# Excerpt From NYS Education Law

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§ 804. Health education regarding mental health, alcohol, drugs, tobacco abuse, and the prevention and detection of certain cancers.

1. All schools shall ensure that their health education programs recognize the multiple dimensions of health by including **mental health** and the relation of physical and **mental health** so as to enhance student understanding, attitudes, and behaviors that promote health, well-being, and human dignity.

# Germination of the Idea for Mental Health in Schools

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Charge from MHANYS Government Affairs Chair to:

- Find an issue that would bring the mental health community together
- That would have significance regarding public awareness, prevention, and youth engagement
- That would have broad significance for the public and not just the mental health community

# Mental Health Education in Schools

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- Met all the checkmarks that we needed
- Issue whose time has come
- Past history around Mental Health Education in Schools

# Why was there opposition to a bill that should be a slam dunk?

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- Mandates, Mandates, Mandates
- Nothing legislators and education stakeholders hate more than that word.
- Educators have a tough time with existing mandatory teaching curriculums, adding another one with no additional funding creates even more concern

# Existing Proposed Mandates

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In 2016, there were 43 proposed education mandates in New York State. Proposed mandates included:

- Civics Lessons
- Organ Transplants
- History of the Ukrainian Genocide
- Indo Caribbean Studies
- Financial Literacy
- Cursive Writing

# More Existing Proposed Mandates

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- Financial Literacy
- U.S. Constitution

And my two favorites

- Traffic Signs
- Driving Education in Elementary and Middle Schools



# Grassroots

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- This law passed because of the groundswell of supporters.
- During the ten-day period when Governor Cuomo decided if he was going to sign or veto the bill, we generated thousands of calls. We were told that it generated more calls than almost any other issue in 2016.
- When we speak with one voice, our constituency is as strong as any in the nation

# Success

- Governor Cuomo signed the bill into law in October 2016
- Implementation to begin in July 2018
- Now there is precedent for the entire country



# Prevalence of Mental Illness in the United States

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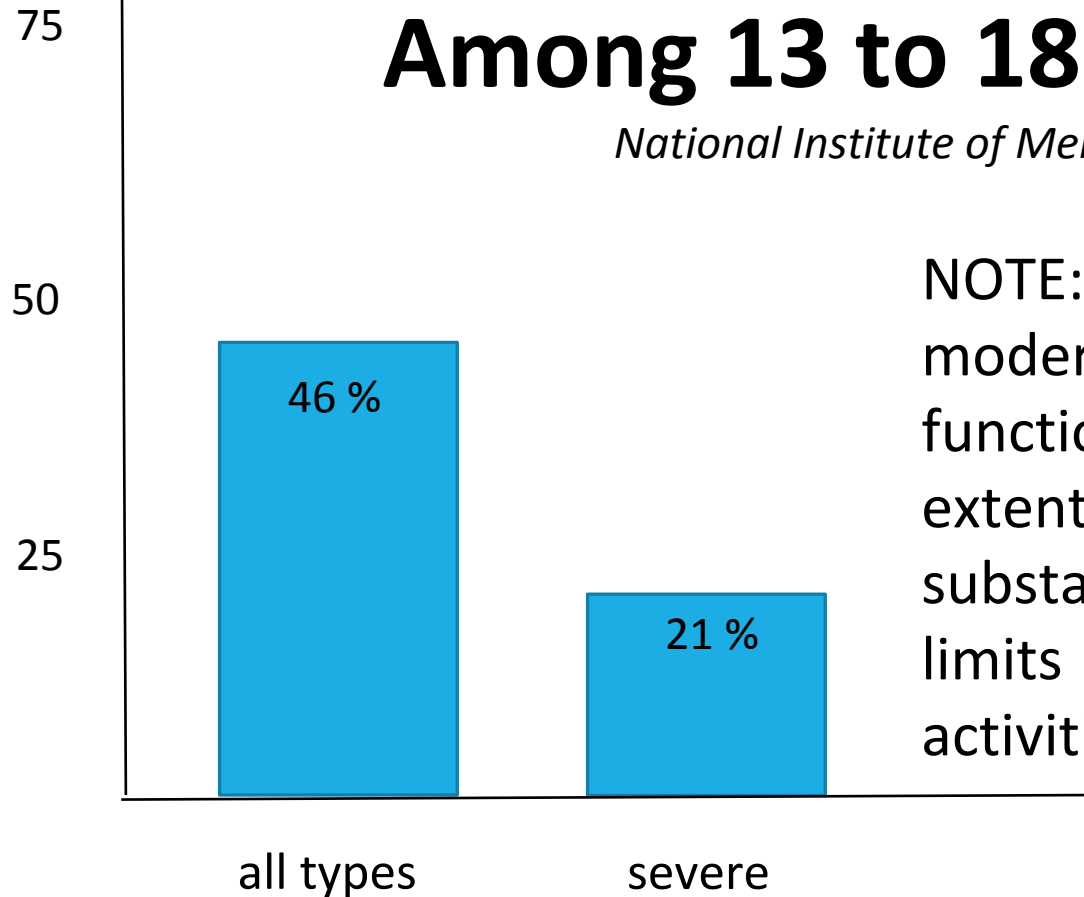
- Mental Illness is Common
- 1 in 5 people in the United States will have a diagnosed mental illness over the course of a year—approximately 61.5 million people
- 18.1% have an Anxiety Disorder
- 6.7 % have a Major Depressive Disorder

*National Institute of Mental Health*

# Lifetime Prevalence of Mental Illness

## Among 13 to 18 Year Olds

*National Institute of Mental Health*



NOTE: qualifier of mild, moderate or severe measures functional impairment or the extent to which the illness substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities

# Mental Illness Often Begins Early in Life

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- Half of all chronic mental health conditions begin by age 14
- 75% of all chronic mental health conditions begin by age 24
- Half of all lifetime cases of Anxiety Disorders begin as early as age 8

*National Institute of Mental Health*

# Failure and Delays in Seeking Treatment

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- Almost 2 out of every 3 adults that need mental health services do not receive them
- Only 10% of people with a substance abuse disorder receive treatment
- 50% of those that do get treatment delay for an average of 10 years

*National Institute of Mental Health*

# Failure and Delays in Seeking Treatment *(cont.)*

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- Poorer long-term functioning
- Increased risk of depression and suicide
- Slower psychological maturation and slower uptake of adult responsibilities
- Strain on relationships and subsequent loss of social supports
- Disruption of education and employment
- Increased use of alcohol and drugs
- Loss of self-esteem and confidence
- Greater chance of problems with the law\*

*National Institute of Mental Health*

# Treatment Delays in Youth Impact Critical Stage of Life

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- Over 60% of young adults with a mental illness were unable to complete high school
- Transitional Age Youth with mental illness are 4 times less likely to be involved in gainful activities (e.g. employment, college or trade school), and...
- Those with a psychiatric disability are 3x more likely to be involved in criminal justice activities

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# Childhood Mental Illness and Suicide

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Each year, approximately 157,000 youth between 10 and 24 receive medical care for self-inflicted injuries at ERs across the U.S.

One in 12 high school students has attempted suicide and one in 6 has seriously considered suicide

*National Institute of Mental Health*

# Why Do We Have This Problem?

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Significant barriers to people getting help....

1. General lack of knowledge about mental illness;
2. Myths, misunderstanding and fear;
3. Stigma, shame & embarrassment;
4. Lack of availability of timely treatment;
5. We have not done as good a job from a public health point of view regarding mental health as we've done with other public health challenges such as cancer, diabetes and AIDs for example

*National Institute of Mental Health*

# Vision for Instruction

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- Public Health Approach to Instruction (not “Psychology 101”)
- Knowledge to facilitate the recognition of mental health problems and help-seeking behavior
- Knowledge that helps to reduce stigma and its role as a barrier to accessing help
- How to help someone experiencing a mental health crisis



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@TheDoctors**

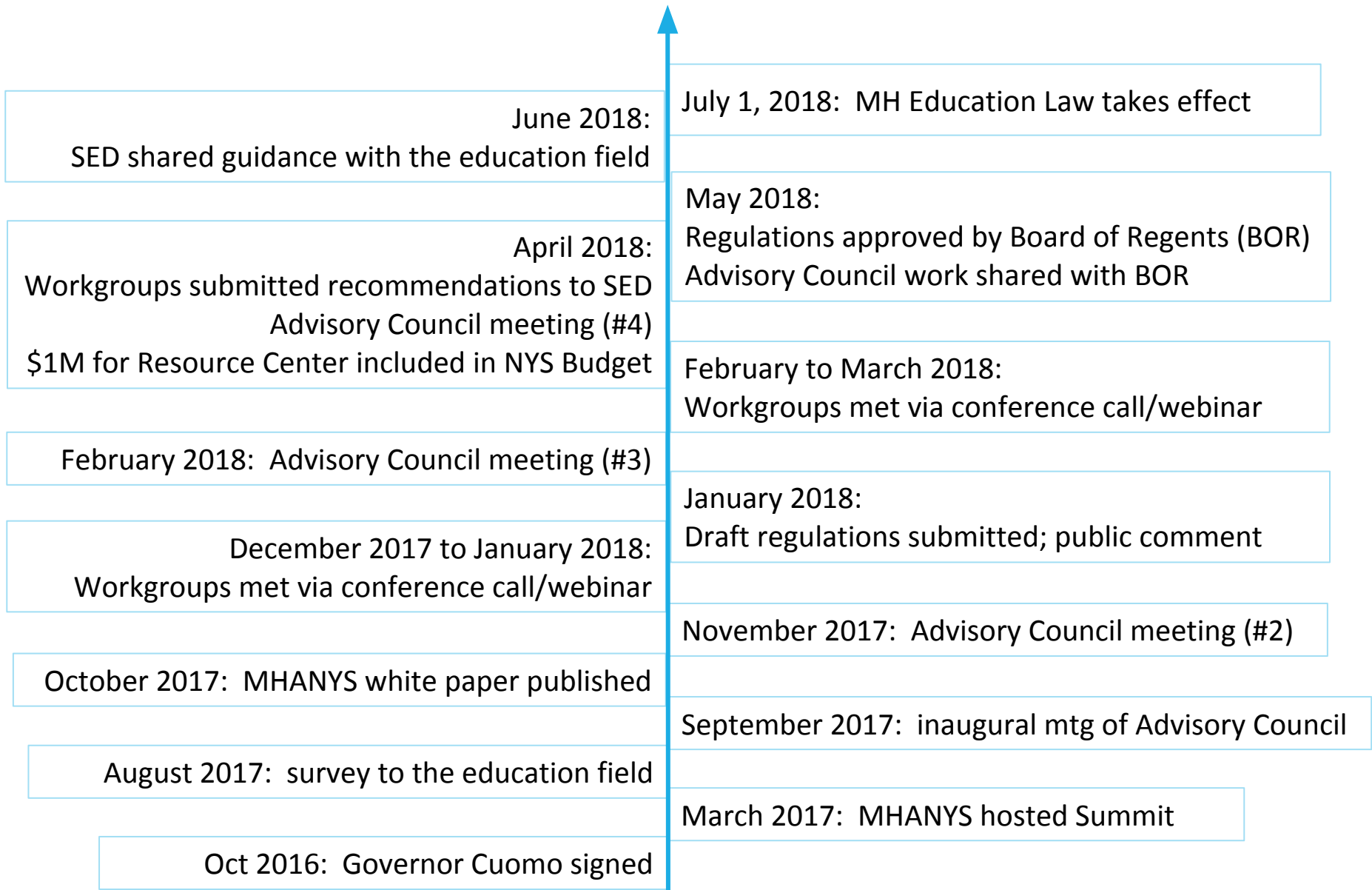


# Supporting Mental Health & Wellness in Schools

Visit us at **MHANYS.org** today!



MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN NEW YORK STATE, INC.



MHANYS began advocacy efforts around 2010

# Mental Health Education in New York Schools

A REVIEW OF LEGISLATIVE HISTORY, INTENT AND  
VISION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

October 19, 2017



Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.

**HEALTHY MINDS FOR A HEALTHY NEW YORK**

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## **Included:**

- Legislative Background
- National Trends
- Why Mental Health Instruction
- Mental Health Literacy
- MHANYS recommendations:  
Guiding Principles  
Curriculum Elements

**Available at:**  
[www.mhanys.org](http://www.mhanys.org)

Chapter 390 of the Laws of 2016, which amends Section 804 of Article 17 of the New York State Education Law, requires schools to begin providing instruction in mental health on or after July 1, 2018.

The Mental Health Association in New York State (MHANYS) recommends:

- a public health approach, including lifelong skills and resources
- knowledge to support own mental wellness & the mental wellness of others
- awareness of when and how to access treatment or other services
- mental health educator(s) should have a minimum of knowledge, education, and training in mental health consistent with the curriculum elements
- curricula/lesson plans should involve the expertise or participation of mental health experts, advocates, providers and recipients (past and/or present)
- **Not** teaching students/staff to diagnose, treat or counsel



# Nine Curriculum Elements

1. A holistic view of wellness, including self-care and personal responsibility.
2. The concept of mental health as an integral part of health.
3. Recognition of signs & symptoms of developing mental health problems.
4. Instruction in the awareness and management of mental health crises.
5. The relationship between mental health and substance abuse.
6. Understanding of how stigma and cultural attitudes contribute to discrimination.
7. The concept of recovery from mental illness.
8. The implications of risk factors, protective factors and resiliency.
9. How to identify and leverage appropriate professionals, services and supports.

# Mental Health Advisory Council

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## WORKGROUPS:

- 1) Mental Health Instruction/Resources for the Classroom (PreK-12th)
- 2) Multiple Dimensions of Mental Health
- 3) Mental Health Resources for Schools, Students and Families
- 4) Supporting a Positive School Climate and Culture
- 5) Implementation



- NYS funding for for FY2019 (\$1M)
- [www.mentalhealthEDnys.org](http://www.mentalhealthEDnys.org)
- [schools@mhanys.org](mailto:schools@mhanys.org)
- 518.434.0439, M-F 8 am to 5 pm

# WHO CAN ACCESS?

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- SCHOOL-BASED PROFESSIONALS & STAFF
  - Some content is password protected:
    - lesson plans
    - moderated forum
    - online training – eligible for 1 hour CTLE; available in October
- STUDENTS
- PARENTS/GUARDIANS
- COMMUNITY PARTNERS

# WHAT IS PROVIDED?

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- TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
  - phone, e-mail, in-person
  - lesson plans
  - resources for curriculum
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
  - Youth Mental Health First Aid
  - Mental Health & Wellness 101
  - on-line (one hour CTLE)
  - webinars
- COMMUNITY PARTNERS
  - Care Coordination
  - Family support and/or respite
  - Peer Services

# OTHER SERVICES:

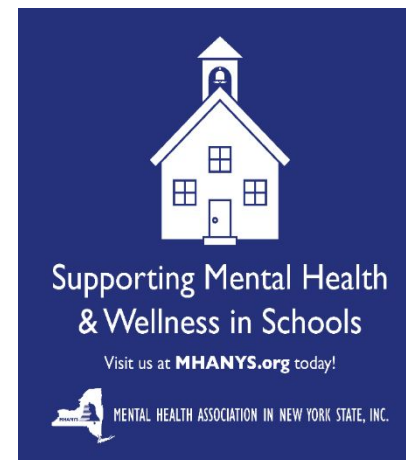
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- 1) ANNUAL CONFERENCE - OCT 17
- 2) REGIONAL SUMMITS
- 3) “SCHOOL SHORTS” – highlight innovative approaches; what schools are already doing
- 4) LOCAL SUPPORT FROM MHA



THANK YOU!



Contact Information:

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